



## NATIONAL RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION

**Our ask:** It's imperative that we maintain the strategic investments that will pay dividends for decades.

## About Us

The National Rural Economic Development Association (NREDA) is a professional, individual-member organization committed to advancing rural development, enhancing member expertise, and achieving social and human service goals in rural communities.

### Who We Are

Our membership spans a wide range of sectors, including—but not limited to—electric cooperatives and rural broadband/telecommunications providers, economic development organizations, government agencies, associations, and consulting firms.

We believe that in order to reach our full potential as rural Americans, we must live together, build together, work together, and grow together. NREDA represents the communities we serve.

We believe K-12 is the basic building block of a functioning workforce that can meet the needs of tomorrow. We support an increased focus on developing educational programs that will create the workforce of tomorrow – a workforce educated in technology and innovation can usher in a clean energy transition, modernize farming and agricultural practices, and tackle the technological challenges coming our way.

We believe that as we modernize our training and education programs, we must ensure that those programs are developed in a way that is accessible and beneficial to people of all walks of life. A diversified workforce is a healthier, more productive workforce. A healthy workforce leads to healthier rural communities – it is imperative that we build programs that encourage diversity.



[nreda.org](https://nreda.org)

We believe that in order to reach our full potential as rural Americans, we must live together, build together, work together, and grow together. NREDA represents the communities we serve.

We work to overcome the following primary barriers to rural economic growth:

- Workforce Development
- Housing and Community Services
- Infrastructure
- Continuous Financing for Current Programs

## A Snapshot

### Key Challenges and Opportunities:

We assist in developing an economic growth strategy.

#### Labor Force Decline

Rural labor force declined from 15% IN 2000 TO 12.5% IN 2020.



#### Remote Healthcare Impact

50% OF RURAL HOSPITALS rely on telehealth for specialty care, as 140+ rural hospitals have closed since 2010, leaving communities without nearby emergency care.



### Housing Development in Rural America:

A strategic imperative exists for economic growth that we must work to address.

#### Affordability Crisis

Median rural home price INCREASED BY 50% between 2016 and 2022, compared to a 40% increase in urban areas.



#### Economic Impact of Broadband

Rural counties with broadband access experience 4X HIGHER business growth rates than those without.



### Infrastructure Demands & Modernizing Rural Infrastructure:

A Pathway to Economic Growth

#### Skills Gap

50% OF RURAL JOBS require middle-skill levels, yet only 43% of rural workers are trained at that level.



#### Growing Grid

The U.S. power grid is expected to GROW BY ALMOST 16% OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.



For every \$1 invested in USDA's REDLG program, rural communities see a \$4.50 return in economic activity. REDLG program's budget is less than 1% of USDA's total budget, despite rural areas making up 97% of the landmass.

Download our full whitepaper.

